

THE TROJAN WAR

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

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WITH A PREFACE

BY THE

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SIXTEENTH IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1911

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PREFACE.

LIKE the 'Myths of Hellas,' the following chapters are a translation of a little book by a German schoolmaster, Professor C. WIRT. They narrate the story of the Iliad in simple language, chiefly for the benefit of young readers. The 'Myths of Hellas' has won itself a deservedly popular place among English children's books, and I venture to anticipate, if possible, a still greater popularity for the present volume.

That the story of the Trojan War, in whatever form, has all the elements which engage the interest of even young children, there is no need to prove. Experience has shown that it is so in fact. And the causes of this fact are equally patent in the movement and incident, the suspenses, the strata-

gem, and the mingling of the human, the heroic and the divine which pervade the story

From the point of view of education this little volume is to be welcomed. As a reading book it cannot fail to charm, and the task which opens pages like these to the eyes of childhood will soon cease to be regarded as a task. Moreover it will be a pure gain that school-boys in the later years of their school-life should approach the *Iliad* with that familiarity with its matter which such a volume as the present, followed perhaps by Pope's *Homer*, or Chapman's, or such other as chance may offer, will without fail have given. It will not be so much that the schoolboy 'shall be brought past the bitterness of his learning,' as that the bitterness will have ceased to exist for him.

From the point of view of culture also something, however slight, may be hoped from works like this. Some hint of 'the true nature of beauty and grace' may in some cases be won; and without expecting a new Keats to be inspired by these pages, we may at least count on some kindred, if

fainter, emotion. Books like this are certainly more likely than some over which the youthful imagination at present ranges to be that 'land of health' amid whose 'fair sights and sounds' Plato tells us that it is desirable for the Commonwealth that our youth should dwell.

Of the translation itself I forbear to speak. Its quality and its merits are already before the public, and the time for words of introduction is past.

W. G. R

March 31, 1884.

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THE TROJAN WAR.



CHAPTER I.

PARIS AND HELEN.

THERE was once a sea god named Nereus, who lived with his fifty daughters in a beautiful shining grotto at the bottom of the sea. The daughters were called Nereids, and they spent most of their time in spinning with golden spindles ; but if a ship was in danger of sinking through storms or rough weather, they were always ready to go to the help of the distressed sailors, for they were kind and friendly to men. They were all marvellously beautiful, especially one of them whose name was Thetis, and who was beloved even by the gods who dwelt on Mount Olympus. Now there was a young prince in Thessaly, named Peleus, who was also dear to the gods, and to him they gave the beautiful Thetis for a wife—a goddess to a mortal man

The marriage was celebrated on Mount Pelion, and all the gods and goddesses were invited to it excepting one, the goddess of Discord, whose name was Eris. She was very angry at not being asked, and determined to have her revenge. So when the wedding-feast was at its height, she suddenly appeared with a golden apple in her hand, and threw it among the guests, crying out, 'For the fairest' Then there arose a strife among the three goddesses, Hera, Athene, and Aphrodite, as to which of them could claim the apple. And fair indeed they all three were—fairer far than any mortal woman. Hera the wife of Zeus, the king of the gods, looked like the most glorious queen that could possibly be imagined, filling the beholder with awe and reverence ; Athene had the beauty of a hero maiden, and her eyes sparkled with courage and wisdom ; Aphrodite was full of charm and grace, and no one who saw her could ever tire of gazing at her bewitching loveliness. As neither of them would give up her claim to the apple, it was settled that they should choose a mortal to decide between them. Eris had already gained her purpose, for when the strife began, all the happiness of the wedding-feast was at an end, and the guests quickly dispersed.

Now there lived in Asia a young prince named

Paris, who had the care of his father's flocks, and tended them on the slopes of Mount Ida, not far from the city of Troy. He it was whom the goddesses chose to decide which of them was the fairest; and one day when he was sitting under the shade of a tree in a wooded vale of Mount Ida, playing on a reed-pipe, the three suddenly stood before him in their dazzling beauty. He was at first quite bewildered at the sight, but they told him for what purpose they had come, and gave him the golden apple, which he was to hand to her whom he considered to be the fairest.

Then Hera first stood forward, and said, 'If you give the apple to me, I will make you a mighty king, ruling over many lands.' After this, Athene spoke, and she said, 'If you give the apple to me, I will endow you with such wisdom that men shall extol you as a god, and shall come from far distant lands to ask your counsel.' Lastly, it was the turn of Aphrodite, and she said, 'My reward, if you give me the apple, will be that you shall have the most beautiful woman in the world for your wife.' Each gift, as the goddesses offered it, appeared to the young prince to be better than the last. When they had done speaking he paused for a moment; but it still seemed to him that the promise of having the most beautiful woman in

the world for his wife was the best, and he held out the apple to Aphrodite. She was overjoyed at her victory, but the other two goddesses were filled with bitter hatred against the young prince and his whole race.

Some time after this, there began to be much talk everywhere of the beauty of Helen, daughter of the King of Sparta, who was said to be the loveliest maiden in the world. Her real father was Zeus, but Tyndareus, the King of Sparta, with whom she lived, was her step-father, and she had two brothers named Castor and Pollux, one of whom was the son of Zeus and the other the son of Tyndareus. The fame of her beauty spread far and wide throughout Greece, and there was hardly a young prince who did not desire to win her for his wife. Soon there was a great assemblage of noble suitors at the court of Tyndareus, and the king had to choose between them. This made him very uneasy, for as he could only make one of them happy by his decision, he feared that those who were disappointed would take up arms against the husband of Helen and destroy the peace of her home; and he could not think of any means of escaping from this difficulty. It happened, however, that among the suitors was Ulysses, the wise King of Ithaca.

He had come to Sparta like the rest, in the hope of obtaining Helen for his wife, but since his arrival he had seen a maiden who pleased him even better ; this was Penelope, the daughter of Icarius, one of the chief men of Sparta. Ulysses guessed rightly what it was that made Tyndareus move about among his guests with a face so full of care, and he said to him that if he would induce Icarius to promise him his daughter Penelope, he would give the king in return some good advice that would help him out of his difficulty. Tyndareus willingly agreed, and Ulysses gave him the advice he had promised. It was this,—that before announcing which of the suitors he had chosen to be the husband of Helen, he should make them all swear solemnly to stand by him if ever he should come into any trouble on her account. Tyndareus followed this wise advice, and none of the suitors ventured to decline the oath, because each of them thought, ‘ Perhaps I may be the chosen husband and then I shall have all the others to help me.’ After they had all sworn, Tyndareus made known his decision, and said that he had chosen the brave young hero Menelaus to be his son-in-law and the heir to his kingdom. Soon after this Tyndareus died, and Menelaus succeeded him as king of Sparta.

Menelaus had thus the most beautiful wife in all Greece, and he and Helen lived happily together for some years. But by-and-by Aphrodite thought it was time that she should fulfil the promise which she had long ago made to Paris in the vale of Mount Ida, and she went to him and said, 'Get ready a ship and set out for Greece. There, in the house of Menelaus, the King of Sparta, you will find the most beautiful woman in the world, and I will cause her to forsake her husband and return with you to Troy.' So Paris begged his father, King Priam, to lend him a ship, for he wanted, he said, to travel to Greece and make friends with the nobles and princes of that country; and Priam gave him what he wanted. When he arrived in Sparta he was kindly received by the king, for though the eyes of the young man were full of love, how should Menelaus suspect that he had come to rob him of his wife?

Helen was soon affected by the magic spell which Aphrodite cast over her, and when she sat at the feast with her husband and Paris, she could not turn her eyes away from the stranger. Every day he pleased her better, though if it had not been for the magic of Aphrodite she would never have preferred him to her husband; for Paris was beautiful indeed, but with the beauty of a dancer,

whereas Menelaus had the beauty of a hero. Many a secret talk they had together, and at last the queen consented to forsake her husband and child, and to go away with Paris to a strange land, taking all her treasures with her. They prepared everything for their flight, and one day when Menelaus came home from hunting, he saw far out at sea the ship in which Helen had sailed away with the robber.

Menelaus was beside himself with grief and distress; but he had a brother, Agamemnon, the powerful King of Mycenæ, who when he heard of his trouble, came to Sparta to try and comfort him. He told him that he would soon be able to recover his wife with the help of the princes who had formerly sued for Helen, for they were still bound by their oath, and it would be their duty to restore her to the husband from whom she had been stolen away.

CHAPTER II.

THE GREEKS AT AULIS

AGAMEMNON went from one princely house to another, and demanded of all that they should speedily make ready to come to the help of his brother ; and he found everywhere a willing ear, for besides the oath they had sworn, the princes were one and all outraged by the shameful way in which Paris had returned the hospitality of Menelaus, and they were eager to set out to punish him. They were all to assemble in the harbour of Aulis with their followers and as many ships as they could get together ; and when they had all arrived, it was such a fleet as had never been seen before in Greece. There were many more than a thousand ships, and the men who filled them could not be counted. -

There were still however, two heroes missing, without whom Agamemnon was not willing to begin the war,--the wise Ulysses and the strong Achilles.

Ulysses was by no means afraid of war, and

never shrank from a gallant fight, but just now he was unwilling to leave his home, for he loved tenderly his wife Penelope; and a year ago a little son had been born to him, whom he had named Telemachus. As he had not come to Aulis, Agamemnon sent two heroes—Menelaus and the wise Palamedes—to Ithaca, to induce him to come and take his part in the war. Ulysses heard of the guests who had landed in his island, and knowing their errand, he immediately thought of a device by which he hoped to escape. He went out into the field, harnessed an ox and an ass together in a plough, and drove the strange pair up and down, making grimaces and gestures as if he were mad; and then he sowed the furrows he had made with salt instead of corn. Menelaus thought he was really out of his mind, but Palamedes knew it was only an artifice. The nurse was standing by with the little Telemachus in her arms, and he took the child from her and laid him down just in front of the advancing plough. If Ulysses had been really mad he would have driven over the child without knowing what he was doing, but instead of that he pulled up quickly, took the boy up in his arms and covered him with kisses. Thus one sharp-witted man outdid another, and as Ulysses had no longer any excuse,

he yielded to the wish of the heroes, took leave of his wife and child, and set off with twelve ships to the help of the Greeks

Achilles was the son of King Peleus and of the goddess Thetis, and it had been decreed by Fate that his life should either be long and uneventful, or else short and glorious. His mother had no hesitation as to the choice she would make for him, and was quite willing to renounce the glory of being mother to a hero whose name would be honoured by all men, if only she could keep him alive for many years. So when she heard that the Greeks were preparing to make war against Troy, she took the young hero to an island and kept him hidden there; for she knew that at the first call he would joyfully hasten forth to go with them and take his part in the perils of the war.

But the Greeks, who were now assembled at Aulis, were told by Calchas the priest, who understood the meaning of the signs vouchsafed by the gods, that unless Achilles went with them to the war they would not gain the victory, and Agamemnon sent therefore Ulysses and some other heroes to find out where he was. They made many inquiries, and at last discovered that he was living, dressed as a maiden, in the house of Lycomedes, king of the island of Scyros, who had a

great many daughters. The spies went to Scyros, and gave themselves out as merchants travelling with beautiful stuffs suitable for ladies' dresses. They were taken to the palace, and Ulysses spread out his stuffs before the king's daughters, and bargained with them about the price. He had also brought a spear and a shield with him, which he placed in a corner of the room. Presently there was heard, on a sudden, without, a great sound of war trumpets, as if some enemies had entered the country and were about to make an attack upon the house. The maidens were all seized with panic and ran away shrieking; only one remained, who with a manly step strode towards the corner where the shield and spear were standing, took them up, and hastened to the door to encounter the enemy. It was, however, only a contrivance of Ulysses, in order to discover which of the supposed maidens was the young hero, and now he smilingly held him back, and said, 'You are Achilles, and we are no traders, but heroes sent by Agamemnon to find out your hiding-place and invite you to join us in our expedition against Troy.' Willingly did Achilles accept the invitation, and he went home to his father's house to prepare for the war. Peleus gave him ships and a troop of brave followers to accompany him; and he admonished him at parting

to make himself renowned as the bravest of all the Greeks, and to fight always in the forefront of the battle

But before the Greeks actually set out, they wished to know whether the Trojans would restore Helen and her treasures peaceably, so Menelaus and Ulysses were chosen to go and discover this,—Menelaus because he was the husband who had been injured, and Ulysses because he excelled all men in wise and prudent speech. They went to Troy and proclaimed that a great host was assembled who had sworn to take and utterly destroy the city, unless the Trojans would consent to give up the wife and the treasures that Paris had carried off. There were many men in Troy who wished for peace, but Paris declared that he would never part with the treasures of which he had possessed himself; and his father, the king, and most of the Trojans were so captivated with the marvellous beauty of Helen, that they were ready to embark in a dangerous war rather than part with her. The messengers were therefore able to effect nothing, and soon left the city. Whilst they were there, they were hospitably entertained by Prince Antenor; but the people bore them no goodwill, and they would not have been secure from violence and outrage if Antenor had not protected them from the mob.

Meanwhile at Aulis the preparations were all complete, and the fleet was now quite ready to set out; but day after day contrary winds blew steadily, so that it was impossible to leave. At last the Greeks desired the priest Calchas to inquire of the gods why they were angry, and how their wrath might be appeased. He told them that it was because Agamemnon had once, when he was hunting, killed a hind which was sacred to Artemis, the goddess of the chase, and that nothing could atone for this but the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon. The king was seized with fear and horror, but he would not hear of making such an atonement; his daughter was dearer to him than all the world besides, and he said that he would let anything happen rather than consent to her being offered up as a victim. So the time went by; the contrary winds continued to blow, and the Greeks became more and more impatient. Then all the other princes said to Agamemnon that for the sake of his brother and of the rest of the Greeks, he must obey the will of the gods; and they so worked upon him, that at last he agreed to do as they wished, and sent to fetch the maiden from her home. But he knew that his wife, Clytemnestra, would not on any account part with her daughter if she were told of the fate that lay in

store for her; so he deceived his wife, and sent word to her that she was to bring Iphigenia immediately to the camp of the Greeks, because he wanted to betroth her to the young Achilles, before they set sail for Troy. Clytemnestra rejoiced at hearing this, and hastened to Aulis with her daughter, in festal array, followed by a noble train of attendants, but when she knew the truth, she was filled with rage and despair, and she cursed her husband for having consented to this dark deed. Iphigenia would gladly have lived longer; but, as there could be no escape for the Greeks except through her death, she bowed before the terrible necessity, and allowed herself to be led to the altar as a willing victim. The sacrificial fire flamed high and bright; beside the altar stood the maiden, and close to her the priest, with the sacrificial knife in his hand. First he prayed to Artemis, and then he raised the knife to plunge it into the heart of the maiden; but at that moment a cloud suddenly descended, covering all with thick darkness;—and when the cloud lifted once more, there lay upon the step of the altar a hind instead of Iphigenia, and the maiden had disappeared. The priest recognised the will of the goddess, and slaughtered the hind for the sacrifice; and no sooner was it accomplished than the sails of the ships

could be seen flapping with the favourable wind Iphigenia had meanwhile been borne through the air to a far distant country, where there was a temple of Artemis, in which she served the goddess as a priestess ; and after many years had passed by, she was allowed once more to return to her home in the beautiful land of Greece

CHAPTER III

GREEKS AND TROJANS.

THE Greeks now sailed over the wide sea till they reached the coast of Asia, and drew near to the city of Troy. They landed at some distance from the city, and beached their ships along the shore, drawing them up in lines one behind the other. No small distance would anyone have had to go who wished to walk the whole length of one of those lines, and countless were the tents set up for the princes and people to live in. The encampment, with its broad streets and narrow pathways, looked like a town not less in size than the mighty Troy itself.

The Trojans were filled with amazement when they saw from their walls this wondrous camp, stretching farther than the eye could reach. Yet they did not lose courage, for they had sent to summon all their neighbours to come and help them, and a goodly band of men had hastened to their assistance. But above all they trusted in the

fifty sons of their king, Priam. Brave and noble they were, every one, but none of them approached in valour the eldest of the brothers, the mighty Hector. He was well skilled, moreover, in the management of armies and he loved his country far beyond life itself. Amongst the other citizens also, there were many brave heroes, and in case the worst should befall them in the open field, they had their high-walled and fast-barred city in which they could always find a safe refuge. They hoped therefore that the Greeks would soon be obliged to abandon the war, and return, shamed and discomfited, to their own homes. They did not know what a noble band of heroes had ranged themselves under the leadership of King Agamemnon.

Of all the heroes the strongest and mightiest was Achilles; but there were many others not far behind him in valour. There were, moreover, among the host of the Greeks, not only brave men who could fight, but also wise men who could give counsel. The cautious Ulysses was there, and the aged and experienced Nestor, who in his youth had lived much in the company of heroes, and had distinguished himself in many a dangerous conflict. He was now so old that the grandsons of those who had been the companions of his youth were already grown men, and he might well have been

excused if he had chosen to remain quietly at home and wait for news of the war till the heroes should return and tell him all about it. But his brave spirit would not allow him to rest in idleness, and he preferred to follow the younger men to Troy, and win for himself honour and renown, not only on the battle-field, but still more in the council-chamber. To him the Greeks referred whenever it was necessary to consider which would be the course that would lead the most surely to glory and to gain, for Nestor had the advantage of knowing from his own experience the great deeds of the past which served for warning and for pattern to the men of later times, and when he rose to speak, the words that fell from his lips were so clear and so persuasive, that his opinion always gained the approval of those who listened to him.

Soon the struggle began, and the plain between Troy and the camp of the Greeks was constantly deluged with blood. Yet year after year went by, and the end of the war seemed to approach no nearer, for there were many valiant heroes on both sides, and fate seemed to favour first one party and then the other. It was as when a troop of boys are engaged in some trial of strength, which often lasts a long time before victory declares itself for one side or the other, for when one party seems quite

exhausted and on the point of giving way, something inspires them often with new ardour, and putting forward their utmost strength, they succeed in regaining the ground they had lost.

The great gods on Mount Olympus watched the fight with keen interest, and themselves took part in it by coming to the help of the mortals who were most dear to them, whether Greeks or Trojans, in their time of need. Hera and Athene had ever loved the Greeks above all other nations, and in this war they were the more ready to help them because they hated Paris and all who fought on his side, and desired their ruin.

Now as the Greeks were far from their homes, they were obliged to take as spoil from the enemy all that they needed to support life. They often therefore made foraging expeditions into the neighbouring towns and villages, headed by Achilles or some other leader, and on these raids the men were killed, the women were captured as slaves, and all that was worth carrying off was brought back to the camp, when the booty was shared between the chiefs and their followers. The soldiers had thus provisions in abundance, and the chiefs filled their tents with vessels of gold and silver and other costly treasures.

CHAPTER IV.

AGAMEMNON AND ACHILLES.

NINE years had thus gone by, and the hopes of the Greeks were fixed upon the tenth year; for it had been foretold by a divine token that the tenth year would witness the end of the war, and the destruction of the hated city. Whilst they were at Aulis they were assembled one day under a beautiful plane-tree close by a clear stream of running water. They had raised an altar of green turf, and were about to offer to the gods a hecatomb—that is, a great sacrifice of many animals. But at that moment, there came from under the altar a great serpent with bloody jaws, who glided up to the top of the tree, where there was a nest with eight young sparrows in it. The poor little birds screamed piteously, but the serpent swallowed them one after another, and ended by devouring the mother, who had kept flying round and round the nest, as if she could protect her young ones. When he had done this, the serpent remained motionless, and the Greeks presently saw that he was turned to stone. Then they asked the priest Calchas

what it meant, and he said, 'As the serpent has devoured the nine sparrows, so will you fight in vain for nine years, but in the tenth year the city will be yours.'

It was now the beginning of the tenth year, and just at this time there arose a grievous division among the Greeks themselves. King Agamemnon had, after one of the foraging expeditions, gained as his share of the booty a beautiful and gifted maiden named Chriseis, who had been captured and made a slave. Her father was a priest of Apollo in the town of Chrysa, and he came to the camp with a consecrated garland round his head and a golden wand in his hand, and demanded in the name of the god he served that his daughter should be restored to him; he brought, moreover, rich treasures for her ransom. All the other chiefs said that the priest should be held in honour and allowed to take away his daughter, but Agamemnon dismissed the old man with rough words, and threatened to punish him severely if he ever again ventured to appear in his presence. Sorrowfully the priest returned to his home and prayed to Apollo to avenge him on the Greeks. The god heard, and soon a pestilence broke out in the camp, first among the mules and dogs, and then among the men themselves. One

after another was laid low by the arrows of Apollo,¹ and day after day arose the flames of the funeral piles on which the bodies of the dead were being burnt. At last Achilles summoned the chiefs together and desired the soothsayer Calchas to declare to them wherefore the god was wroth, and how he might be appeased. Calchas answered that he knew well the cause of the pestilence, but feared to declare it, unless Achilles would swear to protect him from the wrath of him whom he would make his enemy by what he had to say. Achilles swore that he would protect him, were it even from Agamemnon himself; and then Calchas proclaimed the reason of the pestilence, and said further that it would not cease until the priest's daughter had been restored to her home without ransom, and a hecatomb of a hundred victims had been offered up to the god. Agamemnon was much displeased, but he said that for the sake of the Greeks he would send back the slave to her father; yet must they give him another instead of her. To this Achilles replied that he must wait until the time when Troy should be overcome, and then he should receive three or four times the value of his present loss. But Agamemnon was already angered with Achilles

¹ The story of Apollo, Darter of Arrows, will be found in *Myths of Hellas* (Longmans & Co.) chaps. vi. and xxii

for having promised his protection to the sooth-sayer, and he made answer that no other slave would content him but the maiden Briseis, who had fallen to the lot of Achilles himself, and that if Achilles refused to part with her peaceably, he would possess himself of her by force. Then more stormy words and taunting speeches were bandied about between the two chiefs, and at last Achilles said that he would not indeed fight with the king about a slave girl ; but that since this was the gratitude he gained by coming to the help of the Greeks, he should withdraw himself from taking any further part in the war, and return home again with all his ships. But Agamemnon gave no heed to his words. Then Achilles rose, and dashing his princely staff upon the ground, cried out, 'As surely as this staff has borne neither twigs nor leaves since the day when it was cut from the tree, so surely will the time come when the Greeks shall sue in vain for my help, and when Agamemnon will bitterly repent that he has denied to the bravest of his heroes the honour due to him.'

Achilles kept his word. When Agamemnon afterwards sent two heralds to fetch Briseis, he allowed them to take her, notwithstanding her unwillingness to leave him. He withdrew himself, moreover, from the camp and from the council.

chamber, hard though it was to him to feel that he had no longer any part or lot in the war.

The priest's daughter was sent back to Chrysa by Agamemnon without ransom, and with her a hecatomb, which the priest sacrificed on the altar of Apollo, praying that the god would cause the pestilence to cease. At the same time, a huge sacrifice was offered in the camp, and all the Greeks purified themselves and put on clean garments

CHAPTER V.

THE FIGHT BETWEEN PARIS AND MENELAÛS.

THE Greeks returned again to the fight, but without the Myrmidons (as the brave followers of Achilles were called). These remained behind in their tents; and their horses, instead of dashing over the battle-field with the war-chariots, were allowed to feed at their leisure, for the chariots were standing unused in the tents, wrapped in coverings. The Myrmidons tried to beguile the time by amusing themselves with all sorts of games, and vied with one another in hurling heavy plates to see who was strongest of arm, and in throwing spears and shooting with arrows to see who was keenest of eye, but they would far rather have taken their part in the battle, as of old.

When the Trojans saw that the enemy were preparing for the fight, they also made ready, and hastened from the gates to meet them. On both sides the foot-soldiers marched in front, and behind them came the chiefs and princes, mostly in chariots of war. Among the foremost of the Trojan princes was Paris, who in a loud voice demanded that one of the noblest of the Greek heroes should

come forward and fight with him. Menelaus heard the challenge with joy, and he sprang down from his chariot and hastened to meet Paris, eager to slay the man who had robbed him of his wife. But, as when a wayfarer in a wooded glade comes unawares upon a huge snake and flees from it, so was Paris seized with sudden fear, and rushed back to shelter himself among his countrymen. His brother Hector followed him and reproached him for his cowardice 'How will the Greeks scorn thee,' said he, 'thou hast had courage to rob a stranger of his wife, but further than this thy valour does not go, for in the battle thy lute-playing is of no avail, nor yet thy beautiful countenance, neither thy long fair hair.' Paris was put to shame by his words, and he answered, 'Hector, thy reproach is just. Yea, let the Trojans and the Greeks cease from the battle, I alone will fight with Menelaus for Helen and her treasures.' Then went Hector forward and stood in front of the Trojan ranks, making a sign that he wished to speak; and when Agamemnon had proclaimed peace, Hector declared the purpose of his brother. To this Menelaus made answer, 'So let it be; let the quarrel of the Greeks and the men of Troy be thus decided. But first let both sides bind themselves by a sacred treaty that the

party of him who is conquered will abide by the result of the fight. Bring King Priam from the city that he may swear to us ; we will trust in the oath of the old man.'

Hector sent two heralds to the city, and soon Priam arrived on the battle-field, and with him the aged Antenor. Three lambs, one of which was a black one, were placed in the midst of the open plain, and Agamemnon cut off their forelocks, and prayed to Zeus,¹ and to Helios,² and to the goddess of the earth, and to the gods of the neighbouring streams, to witness the oath. Then he cut the throats of the lambs and let their blood sink into the ground, and after this the heralds brought cups of wine which were poured out as a libation to the gods, and Greeks and Trojans prayed alike that Zeus would punish him who should break the oath, and would scatter his brains upon the earth as the wine which was now flowing over it

When the treaty was concluded, Priam returned to the city, for he did not wish to remain, lest haply he should see his son fall in the fight. Hector and Ulysses measured out the ground, and directed the combatants where to take their stand. Then

¹ Zeus, the King of the gods. See *Myths of Hellas*, chap. i.

² The story of Helios, the sun-god, will be found in *Myths of Hellas*, chap. xii.

they placed two pebbles in a helmet, marked with the names of the two heroes, and Hector shook it without looking. The lot of Paris leaped out first, and he had therefore the first throw, he took aim and struck the shield of Menelaus with his spear, but did not pierce through it. It was now the turn of Menelaus; but first he prayed aloud to Zeus to grant him the victory, so that in the time to come men might fear to deal treacherously by those who should show them hospitality; then he threw his spear, and his arm was so much stronger than the arm of Paris that the spear pierced through the shield and the clothes of his enemy even to his body; yet did it not injure him, for he turned aside, so that the weapon did but graze his skin. Then Menelaus sprang upon Paris with his raised sword, and dealt a mighty blow on his helmet, meaning to cleave through it and wound him in the head; but the blade broke in three pieces. Quickly then he seized hold of the crest of his helmet and tore at it, meaning to drag Paris along the ground and thus end his days. But there drew near, unseen of men, Aphrodite, the goddess to whom Paris was dear; and she loosed the strap that fastened his helmet, so that Menelaus soon found himself holding an empty helmet in his hand. He threw it towards the Greeks and seized

a spear, but when he looked round again, Paris was nowhere to be seen. He sought him diligently amongst the Trojans, and they, indeed, would not have helped him to escape, for they now all hated him, looking upon him as the cause of the miserable war, but nowhere could Menelaus find any trace of him, for Aphrodite had covered him with a cloud and carried him through the air to his own house, where he was now lying at his ease, stretched out on soft cushions.

Helen had been watching the fight from the city walls, wishing with all her heart that victory might fall to the lot of her first husband ; for the enchantment by which Aphrodite had made her willing to leave him had now lost its power, and she bitterly regretted the day when she had consented to forsake her home and sail away with Paris

Then Agamemnon cried aloud, 'Ye men of Troy, Menelaus has conquered ; prepare to deliver over to us Helen and all her treasures.' And to this no man made reply. But the goddesses Hera and Athene, who hated the Trojans, and had sworn that the city should be overthrown, had no mind to let the war come to an end so easily ; and Athene took the form of one of the Trojans and went to Pandarus, a hero who had come with his

people from a neighbouring country to help King Priam. To him she said, 'This is now the moment for thee to win the favour of Paris by killing his bitterest enemy, Menelaus, who stands there among the Greeks, suspecting nothing. Pray to Apollo to direct thine arrow that thou mayest not loose it from thy bow in vain.' Pandarus was easily influenced ; he took his bow and arrows, and calling to some of his companions to come and hold their shields before him that he might not be seen by the Greeks, he first prayed to Apollo and then took aim through a space between the shields, and shot. He was a skilled archer, and the arrow would have gone through the heart of Menelaus if Athene had not come to his help ; but she turned the arrow aside so that it hit a place which was protected by a double thickness of belt, and though it pierced through the belt and the garments beneath it, it went but a little way into the flesh.

Thus was the treaty broken and the war was rekindled. Greeks and Trojans rose from the ground on which they had stretched themselves, and soon the battle was again surging tumultuously over the plain, now in one direction, and now in another.

CHAPTER VI

DIOMEDES.

AMONG the Greeks there was a brave young hero named Diomedes, who was dear to Athene. On this day he distinguished himself above all others, and had already slain many a Trojan, when he was espied by Pandarus, who immediately took aim and wounded him in the right shoulder, the arrow piercing through his armour and coming out on the further side. Then Pandarus cried aloud for joy, 'Now, may you press on with fresh courage, O Trojans, for the bravest of the Greeks is wounded, and has but a short time longer to live.' The wound was not so grievous as Pandarus supposed, but Diomedes was unable to fight any longer. Faint and discouraged, he left the battle, and begged one of his friends to draw the arrow from his wound. Then he lifted up his prayer to Athene, and said, 'Gracious goddess, grant me this favour at thy hands, even that I may again at no distant time meet in battle the man who has

wounded me, and boasted that he had smitten me to death.' Immediately he felt new strength and vigour steal through his limbs, and was as sound as if no injury had befallen him. And the goddess herself appeared to him and said, 'Now mayest thou return to the battle, but this day not only the Trojans, but the gods themselves are fighting against you. Therefore will I take away from before thine eyes the cloud which veils the gods from the sight of mortals, so that thou mayest know them and fear them. Dare not to fight with any of the other gods, but if Aphrodite enters into the battle, spare her not.'

Diomedes hastened to place himself again in the foremost rank, and if before he had been dreadful to the enemy, he was now far more terrible, and seemed like a raging lion let loose among them. One of the Trojan princes, Aeneas, who was a son of Aphrodite, saw that the people fled in terror before him, and he sought out Pandarus, the unerring archer, and begged him to seize his bow and put a stop to the destruction that was being wrought by Diomedes. But Pandarus answered him bitterly, 'This appears to be Diomedes that I again see, although it is but a short time since my arrow pierced his body. If it is my fate ever again to return home, let he who

will sever my head from my body if it be not my first action to break my bow in pieces and cast it into the fire. Twice to-day have I aimed with it, and each time have I hit my enemy, but without doing him any injury. Far better had it been for me had I rather brought horses and a war chariot, and fought with spear and sword.' Then Aeneas begged Pandarus to get into his chariot, to which he willingly consented, and it was agreed that Aeneas should guide the chariot, and that Pandarus should fight. So they hastened towards Diomedes, who when he saw them coming, said joyfully to those who were near him, 'Never again, I trust, will these two return alive—at any rate not both. Let but Athene now give me her aid, and I shall kill them and carry off as my booty this noble pair of horses, the offspring of those which Zeus once gave to King Laomedon, in exchange for his son Ganymede.'¹ To which Pandarus made answer from the chariot, 'My arrow has failed to kill thee, Diomedes, yet will I seek to give thee the death-wound with my spear.' He threw, and seeing that he had pierced the shield of his adversary, he cried out, 'Now art thou smitten, and death is

¹ Zeus had once sent his sacred eagle to steal away the beautiful boy Ganymede, and carry him off to Mount Olympus to be his cup-bearer. See 'Myths of Hellas' (Longmans & Co.), p. 127.

near thee' But the spear had not gone through the flesh, and Diomedes in return hurled his weapon and hit Pandarus between the nose and eyes, so that he sank down and died instantly. Aeneas sprang from his chariot and placed himself in front of the dead body of his friend in order to protect it. But Diomedes seized a great stone that had been set up in the plain as a landmark, and hurling it with all his might at Aeneas, he hit him on the thigh and crushed the bone. Aeneas reeled and fell to the ground, stunned by the blow, but his mother Aphrodite came quickly to his rescue, and covered him with her veil, embracing him. Diomedes perceived her, and remembering what Athene had said to him, he cried aloud, 'Is it not enough for thee, O Aphrodite, to beguile weak women? dost thou desire also to meddle with strife and war?' and saying this, he thrust at her with his spear, and wounded her beautiful hand. No blood flowed from the wound, for the gods who neither eat bread nor drink wine have no blood in their veins, but have instead the red juice ichor, which now streamed over the fair skin of Aphrodite. She was terrified, and fled away with a cry of horror, leaving the body of her son upon the ground. Yet was it not forsaken, for the god Apollo, who was also a friend to the Trojans, covered it with a cloud so that it could

not be seen by the enemy. Diomedes alone discerned the god, and knew that Aeneas was still lying in the self-same place. Undaunted, he pressed towards him, and three times he essayed to give him the death-wound, but each time he was driven back by a mighty blow on his shield from the hand of Apollo. For the fourth time he drew near, but in a voice that chilled the blood even of Diomedes, Apollo said to him, 'Stand back, Diomedes, and dare not to fight against the immortal gods.' Then the hero turned unwillingly away. His companions had meanwhile possessed themselves of the divinely descended horses of Aeneas, and had driven them away to the tents of the Greeks.

With groans and tears came Aphrodite back to the abode of the gods, although her wound was already healed. But Athene mocked her, and said to Zeus, so that she could hear it, 'Aphrodite has no doubt been again persuading some Greek woman to leave her home with one of the Trojans to whom she is now so devoted, and has been hindered in her caresses by scratching her hand with a brooch.'

CHAPTER VII

HECTOR AND AJAX.

WHEN evening approached, Hector again made a sign that he desired to hold parley with the Greeks. Both armies stayed from the battle, and Hector cried aloud, 'Hear me, Greeks and Trojans. Zeus has not willed that the treaty should be kept, and now must we again fight until victory shall declare itself for this side or for that. Let then one of the bravest heroes of the Greeks stand forth and fight with me. And let it be agreed that the armour of him that is slain shall belong to the victor, but his corpse shall be given back to his own people that it may be buried with honour.' Nine of the Greek heroes offered to fight with Hector, and when they cast lots to see which of them it should be, the lot fell to him whom the Greeks most desired—to the mighty Ajax, called the Greater, because there was another Ajax in the army who was less of stature than he. Greatly did he rejoice that the lot had fallen to him, and he clothed himself in armour from

head to foot, and went forth with a step as bold as the god of day himself, and with an air as gay as one who goes to the dance. In his left hand he carried his huge shield, which protected him from the crown of the head right down to the feet ; it was made of seven layers of strongest ox-hide, covered with an eighth layer of bronze.

The Trojans were afraid for Hector, and the hero himself felt his heart beat quicker than was its wont. Ajax said to him, ' Though Achilles in his wrath remains by his ships, yet have we many heroes who fear not to fight with thee. Take, if thou wilt, the first throw.' Hector stretched wide his arm and hurled his spear with all his might against Ajax. There was no lack of force in the throw, but the weapon went through but six folds of the shield, and stayed itself in the seventh. Then it was the turn of Ajax ; and his spear pierced through shield and armour, and would have wounded his adversary in a mortal part, but that Hector turned a little aside so that the weapon did but graze his flesh. Both the heroes then drew forth their spears, and fell upon one another like two lions or wild boars. Before long, Hector was slightly wounded in the neck, but he nevertheless raised from the ground a heavy stone, and struck the boss in the centre of his enemy's shield. Then

Ajax laid hold of a stone still heavier—a stone that would have been large enough for a mill-stone—and threw it with such force against the shield of Hector, that it crashed through it and caused him to sink upon the ground. Yet he at once sprang up undaunted, and they were about to continue the fight with swords. But by this time the sun had sunk low in the heaven, and the heralds who stood by to overlook the fight held out their wands between the two combatants, and stopped them. Then said the herald of Troy, ‘Dear children, Zeus loves you both, for brave heroes ye are, both the one and the other. Cease therefore from the struggle, for now is darkness approaching, in which it behoves men to rest and not to fight.’ Ajax left it to Hector to decide whether or not they should continue the fight, for it was he who had given the challenge ; and Hector said, ‘Let us cease for to-day ; often again shall we measure our strength one against the other. But first let us exchange gifts, that men may say of us that we separated in honourable friendship after a hard fight.’ Hector then presented to Ajax his sword with its sheath adorned with silver bosses, and the sword-belt belonging to it ; and Ajax gave to Hector his rich belt of purple dye.

So ended the battle for that day, and both

parties left the field. The Trojans retreated within the walls of their city, and held a council at which the aged Antenor spoke. He said, 'The sacred treaty has been broken by us—we cannot deny it—and I fear the wrath of the gods. Let us therefore be advised, and restore Helen and her treasures to the Greeks.' But Paris answered, vehemently, that the treasures indeed he would be willing to give up, if that would bring peace, but that with Helen herself he would not part for any price.

So on the next morning a herald was sent to the chiefs of the Greeks, to say that if they would make peace with Troy, all the treasures of Helen should be delivered over to them. But the Greeks refused the offer; and Diomedes said, 'If they were willing to give up Helen herself into the bargain we should nevertheless fight on, for even a fool must see that destruction is already hovering over the city.' They agreed however to make a truce for some days, until the dead had been removed from the battle-field, and buried honourably; and Greeks and Trojans met in peace, each side seeking among the corpses for their own companions. The Trojans piled their dead upon waggons and carried them away into the city, where they were given over to their sorrowing kinsmen and burnt with fitting rites. And the fallen Greeks in

like manner received the funeral honours due to them.

The Greeks made use of this respite to protect their camp and their ships against any possible surprise by the enemy, and on the side towards Troy built a high wall that stretched the whole length of the camp. This wall had several gates in it, and was further protected by a deep and wide trench.

They were also cheered during these days by the arrival of a ship from Lemnos, laden with wine. The king of the island had sent a thousand measures as a present to Agamemnon and Menelaüs; the remainder was for sale. At this time coined money was not yet in use, but the Greeks offered the merchants all kinds of precious things, cups and vessels of bronze, hides, live cattle, and slaves, all of which the Lemnians were glad to take in exchange for their wine.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REPULSE OF THE GREEKS.

DURING the night before the next battle, loud claps of thunder pealed through the camp of the Greeks, and they feared that this was a warning of approaching misfortune. And so it proved to be. When the battle began, it was at first somewhat uncertain to which side the victory was inclining, for now the Trojans gave way, and now the Greeks ; but as the day wore on, the Greeks became more and more distressed, and glad they were when darkness fell and allowed them to retreat behind their high wall. The Trojans, on the contrary, were eager to press home the advantage they had gained, and fearing lest the Greeks should escape them by fleeing away to their ships in the night, they determined to prevent this by encamping for the night in the open plain outside the city. Watch-fires were soon kindled, round which the men gathered in groups ; and having sent for bread, meat, and wine from the city, they refreshed

themselves with good cheer, and prepared to keep watch all night.

But among the Greeks, the chiefs were full of care and anxiety as they looked forward to the next day, and above all, Agamemnon was troubled. For not only would there fall to him, as leader of the army, the greatest measure of glory or of shame from the result of the war, but he felt moreover that the repulse of the Greeks had been brought about by his fault. It was on account of his overbearing conduct that Achilles had withdrawn himself from them; and he was now anxious to make amends for what he had done. He chose out from among his treasures the best and costliest, and sent them to Achilles, hoping thereby to turn away his wrath; right royal presents they were, and such as could only be sent by a great king—gold and precious drinking cups in abundance, and besides these seven beautiful slaves, and amongst them Briseis, about whom all the strife had arisen. He promised, too, that when Troy should be conquered Achilles should be at liberty to fill his ship with gold and bronze from the booty, and that if ever they returned to Greece, he should have seven of his well-peopled cities, and the fairest of his daughters to be his wife. He chose moreover as his messengers the

best friends of Achilles—the wise Ulysses, the mighty Ajax, and the aged Phœnix, who for years had been his guardian and teacher. These he sent to the hero; and Achilles was rejoiced to see his friends, and entertained them hospitably. But when they announced their errand, neither the wise words of Ulysses nor the earnest entreaties of Phœnix were of any avail to move him. A fierce hatred of the king had taken possession of his soul, and rather than put it away from him, he was prepared to witness the destruction of his fellow countrymen and of his best friends; and he even declared that he would forthwith sail back to his home and live there in peace and happiness for the rest of his days. The messengers were obliged to depart without having gained their end, and had to announce to the assembled chieftains that they must hope for nothing from Achilles.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SPYING BY NIGHT.

MEANWHILE, from the watch-fires of the Trojans streamed forth cheerful sounds of piping and flute-playing, which reached the camp of the Greeks, and reminded them more than ever of the sad plight in which they were. In their anxiety for the safety of the camp, Agamemnon and the other chiefs determined to go round themselves and see that the watchmen were all on the alert. Having satisfied themselves about this, they then held counsel together as to what it would be best to do ; and Nestor said to the other heroes, ' Which of you would dare to steal over to the camp of the Trojans, and either overhear their counsels, or else perchance take prisoners some of those who lie on the outskirts of the camp ? Great renown would he gain who should dare to do this, and every chief would give him a ewe with its lamb.' Then uprose the fearless Diomedes and said, ' I will venture, yet would I gladly have a companion, for two heads

are better than one.' At the same moment, six others offered themselves, and Agamemnon said to Diomedes that he might choose the one that he preferred to take with him. He at once decided for Ulysses, 'for,' said he, 'Athene loves him, and with him I should hardly fear to go through burning fires, for he can find a sure way out of all difficulties.'

The heroes armed themselves and went over the battle-field towards the watch-fires of the enemy. Both were dear to Athene, and she sent them for their encouragement a good omen—a heron that flew right over their heads; yet could it only be recognised by its cry, so thick was the darkness of the night.

Hector, too, determined to send out a spy, and he offered the best chariot and the best horses that should be taken from the Greeks as a reward to him who would venture into their camp and bring him word back as to whether they were thinking of flight. This offer fired the ambition of Dolon, a young man of mean appearance, but a good runner. He stepped forward and said, 'I will go, but first swear that thou wilt give me the noblest of all, the steeds of Achilles himself. For the sake of these I will make my way even to the tents of Agamemnon, where the chiefs are doubtless at this

present time assembled in council.' Hector swore that no other than Dolon should possess the steeds of Achilles, and called upon Zeus to witness the oath; and Dolon set out on his way with an exulting heart, picturing to himself the magnificent chariot and horses of Achilles, and the pride with which he should stand on the chariot and drive the horses whithersoever it might please him.

Meanwhile Ulysses and Diomedes were cautiously making their way forwards, when suddenly Ulysses stopped and whispered to his companion, 'I hear some one coming from the direction of Troy, but whether he comes to plunder the dead or to seek for news I cannot tell. We will let him pass us and then turn and take him prisoner.' The whole field was strewn with corpses, and they lay down among them and waited till Dolon had gone by; then they sprang up and ran after him. Dolon thought at first that they were some of his countrymen who had been sent by Hector to recall him; but when they came near and did not speak, he perceived that they were enemies, and ran as fast as he could in the hope that by making a round he would be able to regain the camp of the Trojans. But they cut off his retreat, and obliged him to approach nearer and nearer to the camp of the Greeks.

Presently Diomedes called out, 'Stand, or my spear goes through thee!' and at the same moment he threw his spear, but so that it did not hit him, but flew over his head, and stayed itself in the ground beyond. Dolon stood still, his teeth chattering with fright, and when they came up to him he said between his tears, 'Kill me not, but take me prisoner, for my father is rich and he will willingly ransom me when he hears that I am in your hands. Ulysses answered, 'Think not now of death; but tell me why hast thou come out at night to the field of battle,—to spy for news, or for some other purpose?' With a trembling voice Dolon made answer, 'Alas, it is Hector who has brought this trouble upon me. He promised me the chariot and horses of Achilles if I would bring him news about you.' At this Ulysses smiled and said, 'Thou trustest over-much in thine own powers: none save Achilles himself can control those horses. But say, where is the tent of Hector? and how is the camp guarded?' Dolon replied, 'Hector and the other princes are in the midst of the camp, and the rest of the Trojans keep watch around their fires. But the allies are asleep, for they have no women and children in the city to guard.' Once more Ulysses asked, 'Are the allies dispersed amongst the Trojans, or do they camp apart?' Dolon gave information as to where

the several bands had encamped ; and hoping to gain the good-will of the heroes, he added, ' If you wish to creep into the camp you will find in the outermost rank the Thracians and their king Rhesus, who has the most beautiful horses I have ever seen ; they are snow-white and as swift as the wind. His chariot gleams with silver and gold, and his armour is of pure gold. But now, take me to your ships, or bind me here to yonder tamarisk tree whilst you see for yourselves if I have indeed spoken the truth.' But Diomedes looked darkly at him, and said, ' Thou canst no longer live, however much thou mayest beseech me. If we let thee go free, thou wouldst again come out against us, either as spy or as combatant. Only by thy death can we secure ourselves against thee.' Dolon would have entreated still further, but his speech was cut short by the sword of Diomedes, and he sank down and died. Diomedes took his clothes and weapons from him, and Ulysses held them up in the air, and said, ' This booty we dedicate to thee, Athene ; and now be with us as we go in search of the Thracians and their horses.' He then hung the spoils upon a tree, that they might be able to find them on their return journey, and take them home.

They went on, picking their way through the

corpses till they reached the place where the Thracians were encamped. Ulysses perceived them first, and whispered to Diomedes, 'See, there are the milk-white horses, and there must the comrades of the King of Thrace be lying.' Diomedes drew his sword, and going from one to another of the sleeping Thracians who were stretched in front of their king, he pierced each one through the heart. Twelve of them there were, and the king, whom he killed last of all, was the thirteenth. As each was killed, Ulysses dragged him away by his feet from the place where he had been lying, so as to leave a clear space in front of the horses ; and then he seized the horses and drew them forwards. Diomedes would have continued his bloody work, but Athene whispered into his ear, 'Do not forget that you have to return to the ships' The heroes then swung themselves on to the horses' backs, and galloped away. It was indeed quite time they did so, for the groans of the dying men had aroused one of the Thracians, and when he saw what destruction the enemy had wrought among them, he uttered a loud cry of alarm. The Trojans heard it, and they hastened to the spot and pursued the heroes, but could not overtake them.

The Greek chieftains, who were waiting by their

watch-fires for the return of the two heroes, were surprised to hear the clattering of horse-hoofs, for they had but hoped at best that their comrades would return safe and sound, and little had they expected them to bring back horses taken as spoil. But joyfully were the riders welcomed when the firelight revealed the faces of Ulysses and Diomedes. They quickly dismounted and related all that had befallen them, and then all the heroes went to their tents for the rest of the night.

The clothes and weapons of Dolon were set out in the ship of Ulysses, and solemnly presented to Athene.

CHAPTER X.

PATROCLUS.

THE night had passed, and the sun had again risen out of the sea. The Greeks hailed the new day with anxiety, yet did not delay to march against the Trojans, who were full of hope that this day would end the long war, and decide the victory in their favour.

At first the Greeks made a brave stand ; but the gods were against them, and some of their best heroes were wounded and obliged to leave the battle-field. Achilles was standing at the prow of his ship, looking on at the raging tumult of the battle, when there passed at some distance from him a chariot of war which the aged Nestor was driving hurriedly back towards the ships. He had a wounded man beside him, and Achilles thought it must be Machaon his friend, who was both a brave hero and a skilled physician. Yet doubting if he had seen rightly, he called his friend Patroclus and asked him to go to the tent of Nestor, and discover if it was in truth Machaon who was wounded. Patroclus was the

dearest friend of Achilles ; they had lived together as boys, and as they grew older they became more and more attached to one another, and now Achilles loved Patroclus better than anyone else on earth, and could not bear to live without him.

When Patroclus reached the tent of Nestor, he saw that Achilles had been right, and was about to return and tell him so. But Nestor held him back, and said, ' Would that this were the only one ! But alas ! grievous misfortune has overtaken us, and all our best men—Ulysses, Diomedes, Agamemnon, —lie in their tents, pierced through with darts or arrows, and powerless to fight. Has the great Achilles no pity ? Means he to wait till Hector thrusts burning brands among our very ships ? Has he utterly forgotten the bidding of his father Peleus to make himself renowned as the bravest of all the Greeks, and to fight ever in the forefront of the battle ? Entreat him, I pray thee, to come at last to our help ; perchance he may yield at thy request. Or, should he still refuse, let him at least send thee into the battle at the head of his Myrmidons, and lend thee his armour. The Trojans will think that he is again in our midst, and will fall back in terror.'

The compassionate spirit of Patroclus had already been moved by the distress of the Greeks,

and the words of Nestor pierced his heart and made him more grieved than ever. He was hurrying back to Achilles, but on the way he met a hero so badly wounded in the thigh with an arrow that he could scarcely drag himself along, who implored him to carry him to his tent and draw out the arrow and lay cooling herbs upon the wound. Patroclus could not refuse, and thus it happened that he remained longer in the camp than he had intended.

During this time the battle had taken a still worse turn, for the Greeks, unable to resist the attack of their foes in the open field, had retreated behind their wall for shelter, and barricaded the gates. The Trojans, on their side, were pressing on against the wall, and doing their utmost to storm it. Many of them however lost their lives in the attempt, for the Greeks had taken their stand on the top of the wall, and each Trojan who was bold enough to climb up it was either hurled from the top or pierced through with the sword. The trench was soon filled with the slain, but Hector kept urging on his men to fresh efforts, showing them himself an example of undaunted courage. At last, after many vain attempts, Hector succeeded in bursting open one of the gates with a huge stone that he hurled against it; the two posts gave way, and an opening was made, through which the host of

the Trojans could press forward into the camp,—thus bringing the battle nearer and nearer to the ships.

All this Patroclus saw before he could return to Achilles, to whom he described it with tears in his eyes, beseeching him that if he would not himself go to the help of the Greeks, he would at least allow his friend to array himself in his armour and lead the Myrmidons to the battle. Stern and pitiless as Achilles had been when the messengers of Agamemnon were sent to him, he was nevertheless moved at the extremity to which the Greeks were now reduced, and yielded to the wish of his friend. Patroclus was soon standing in the war-chariot of Achilles, arrayed in his armour, and bearing his weapons—only the mighty spear he left behind, for that could be wielded by no man save the son of Peleus himself. The Myrmidons had heard with joy that they were to arm themselves and follow Patroclus to the battle, and they were quickly ready to set out; but before they started, Achilles charged his friend on no account to pursue the Trojans to the walls of their city, or attempt to take it, but only to drive them from the camp.

It was high time that someone should come to the rescue of the Greeks, to save them from utter destruction. Long already had the battle raged around the ships themselves, and Hector and the

bravest of the Trojans were exerting themselves to the utmost to set these on fire. On one of them stood the mighty Ajax, who had seized a long and heavy oar, and rushed from one side of the ship to the other, dealing ever a death-blow to the foremost of the enemy. Faint and exhausted he was with the long day's strife, but the dire extremity of the moment still upheld him, and goaded him to put forth his utmost strength. For well he knew that if but one ship should catch fire, the flames would quickly spread through the whole fleet, and cut off the last resource of the Greeks—that of fleeing back to their own homes. Meanwhile, among the Trojans, Hector kept ceaselessly shouting, 'Bring fire! bring fire! bring fire! This day is a day of victory given to us by Zeus himself, in which to destroy the ships that have brought this miserable war to our coasts.' At last Ajax was unable any longer to brandish the heavy oar; he seized a lighter weapon, but the enemy rained countless darts upon him and his companions, and they began to yield, inch by inch. Then suddenly among the Trojans arose a cry, 'Achilles himself! Achilles is come against us!' as the Myrmidons, with Patroclus at their head, charged amongst them. They believed it was no other than Achilles, the hero dreaded above all men by every enemy of the

Greeks ; and, wearied as they were with the struggle which they had carried on since daybreak, they turned and fled before him till they had left the camp far behind them, and were again out in the open field. The Myrmidons pursued them, with the other Greeks, who were now inspired with fresh courage, and many a Trojan was laid low in the dust. Even when they discovered that it was not Achilles himself who was fighting against them, they could not regain their former confidence, but allowed themselves to be driven farther and farther towards the city. Long before this ought Patroclus to have turned back, in obedience to the wishes of Achilles, but as a stone that has been set rolling down hill is hard to stop, so was Patroclus on this ill-fated day. His hopes rose ever higher and higher, and as the slaughtered Trojans fell before him, he even dared to think that it might be his proud lot to win the city by storm, and thus put an end to the war. But a limit had been set to his achievement. As he pursued Hector hotly towards the city, the god Apollo, the friend and protector of the Trojans, came behind and dealt him a heavy blow upon the back just between the shoulders. The helmet fell from his head, shield and armour sank to the ground, and darkness covered his eyes. Then one of the Trojans pierced him

with his lance, and Patroclus would have retreated among his followers for protection, but Hector sprang upon him and thrust his spear deep into his body. Exultingly he cried aloud, 'Thou thoughtest, Patroclus, to take our city, but now shalt thou be food for the vultures' Patroclus was at the point of death, but with a weak voice he replied, 'Neither hast thou much longer to live, for death will speedily overtake thee by the hand of Achilles' With these words he sank back and died, and Hector took his armour—the armour that Achilles had lent him—and put it on his own body.

Then there arose a new battle around the corpse of Patroclus. It was no longer a question of storming or defending Troy, but of gaining the dead body, for the Trojans desired to carry it off as a trophy, while the Greeks on the other hand felt that they would be eternally disgraced if they did not rescue it and bring it back to the camp that it might be burned with due honours. In the struggle, the corpse was dragged this way and that way, now towards the city and now towards the camp, and the heaps of the slain rose higher and higher. At last the Greeks got possession of the corpse, but there was still a danger lest the enemy should again drag it away from them ; and while Ajax and Menelaus withstood the Trojans who pressed upon

them, they sent a messenger to tell Achilles that his friend had been slain and that his body was in danger of falling into the hands of his enemies.

When Achilles heard the message that had been sent, he rolled in the dust groaning in his despair and grief ; but quickly recovering himself, he sprang up and hastened at his utmost speed towards the trench that surrounded the camp, without waiting either for armour or weapons. Three times he uttered a piercing cry of grief—the most heart-rending that ever came from human breast—and the Trojans knew that this was indeed the voice of Achilles, and fled before it, seized with terror ; neither did they make any further attempt to get possession of the body.

CHAPTER XI.

ACHILLES AND HECTOR.

THE hatred which Achilles had cherished against Agamemnon had been to him at first as sweet as honey, but now he cursed it, in that it had cost him the life of his dearest friend, and he cared for nothing but to avenge the death of Patroclus. His armour and his weapons had been seized by Hector, but his mother begged Hephæstus, the blacksmith god, to forge him some new ones. By the next morning they were ready for him, and far more splendid than those that he had before. He immediately called an assembly of the Greeks and forswore his enmity to Agamemnon, who on his part acknowledged that he had been in fault, and ordered all the costly gifts that he had offered as an atonement to be forthwith carried to the tents of Achilles. But the hero could take no pleasure in them; his one desire was that the battle should begin at once, and the time seemed long to him while the Greeks strengthened themselves with food for the fight. He himself would neither eat nor

drink nor allow himself to take pleasure in anything, until he had avenged his friend.

The Trojans had again remained all night in the open field. One of their heroes indeed, foreseeing how much greater their peril would be now that Achilles had returned to the help of the Greeks, had advised that they should shut themselves up in the city, and repulse the enemy from the walls if they attempted to storm it. But Hector, who knew no fear, had answered that though Achilles might indeed be the son of a goddess, yet was he nevertheless a mortal, and liable to perish even as any other; and he persuaded the Trojans to continue in the plain. When therefore the Greeks marched out to the battle, they found their enemies waiting for them, and there ensued the bloodiest battle of the whole war. Some of the Greek heroes were still suffering from the wounds of the previous day, and were unable to fight with as great vigour as before, but this availed the Trojans nothing, for Achilles was far stronger than all the rest, and this day he fought like a reaper under the strokes of whose scythe the ripe ears of corn fall helplessly to the earth; for wherever he pressed in among the ranks of the Trojans, there the bodies of the fallen enemies were soon lying on the ground in heaps.

For a long time, however, the Trojans, inspired by Hector, would not give up the struggle ; but at last they began to retreat towards the city, and ever as they drew nearer to the walls, their pace increased in swiftness. The old greybeards of the city had watched their flight from the walls, and now they opened the gates to let them in ; but so close at their heels was Achilles that they would not have been able to prevent his pressing in after them, had not Apollo, their protector, come to their assistance. He took the form of a Trojan hero and placed himself in front of Achilles, as if he would have fought with him, but when Achilles turned upon him he fled, and Achilles pursued him. He took care to keep such a little way in front of him, that each moment Achilles thought he was on the point of overtaking him, and thus he enticed him farther and farther away. When at last they had left the battle far behind them, Apollo turned and said scornfully, 'Why dost thou follow me, Achilles, leaving the Trojans to escape meanwhile? Over me death has no power.' And with this he vanished, and Achilles in anger hurried back to the gates.

The Trojans were by this time in safety behind their walls ; only Hector stood outside in front of the gates. It was he who had advised the fight in the open field, and he was ashamed to enter the city

as a fugitive. Moreover, so great was his manly courage, that he did not despair of being the victor in a single combat with Achilles himself. In vain did his father and mother cry to him from the walls, beseeching him not to risk his life, but to save it for the sake of the city, of which he was the chief stay and support ; he remained deaf to all their entreaties. But when Achilles drew near, and saw the space in front of the gate empty save for the presence of his deadly enemy, he sprang towards him like a panther, with flaming eyes ; and as Hector saw those eyes approach him, he was seized with sudden fear, and he turned and fled, and Achilles pursued him. It was a race in which each of the runners might well put forth his utmost strength, for to Hector the stake was life, to Achilles the slaking of his deep thirst for vengeance. Three times they ran round the whole city, and at last, when for the fourth time they reached the gate, Hector paused, and awaited his enemy. When Achilles came up, he said to him, ‘ Let now the gods decide which of us two shall prevail over the other. And if thou shalt fall, I will indeed take thy weapons for spoil, but thy body I will send to thy friends that it may be burnt with fitting rites. This I swear to thee, if thou wilt swear to me in like manner’ But Achilles answered him with dark looks, ‘ Hast

thou, then, heard that lions parley with men, or that wolves are wont to make terms with sheep? Defend thyself, and from me expect nothing but bitterest enmity.' He then drew his spear and hurled it at Hector with his utmost strength. But he slipping aside, the spear passed him and sank deep into the earth behind. 'Thou hast failed,' he cried; 'and now may the gods grant to me that I succeed better, that so the war may by thy death be lightened for the Trojans.' With these words, he hurled his spear and struck the shield of Achilles with a mighty blow, but from the work of Hephæstus the spear rebounded without piercing it. Then he tore his sword out of the sheath, and rushed against his enemy. But Achilles held his shield before him, spying meanwhile for a part of the body of Hector which was not thoroughly protected by his armour. In the neck he presently perceived a place where he could thrust in his spear, and this he did, wounding him mortally. Hector sank to the ground in death, and Achilles said to him, with a scornful laugh, 'Thou thoughtest in sooth that Patroclus would die unavenged, but now shall thy body be food for dogs and vultures.' In a weak voice Hector implored Achilles by all that was dear to him to allow his body to be ransomed by his parents with gold and silver;

but Achilles answered him pitilessly, 'Should they offer for thy corpse its weight in gold, it shall not escape the birds and the dogs.' Hector was now at the point of death, but with his last breath he said, 'Thou hast a heart of iron, Achilles, but think of me when thou art laid low by the arrow of Paris.' In those days men believed that the dying could foretell the future, and Achilles accepted the prophecy. He answered, 'Be it so. Should the gods so will it, Death will find me prepared to meet him.'

The Greeks now came crowding round the dead hero, and many who had lost a brother or a friend at the hand of Hector could not refrain from avenging their death by thrusting a spear into the corpse. Even Achilles was not satisfied with his death, and to glut his desire for vengeance, he pierced the heels of the corpse, which lay stripped upon the ground, and tied them with thongs to the step of his chariot. Then he mounted the chariot and urged on the horses, dragging after it, along the ground, the body of the noble hero, which was now covered with dust and blood. The whole army of the Greeks followed, shouting a song of victory. When they reached the camp, Achilles, followed by the Myrmidons, drove three times round the bier on which the dead Patroclus lay, dragging

the mangled body after him, then he unbound it and laid it, face downwards, at the foot of the bier, as if to testify to his friend that he had indeed been avenged

Achilles was now willing to take some food, but he would not wash the blood from his face and hands until he had completed his duty to his friend and rendered him the last honours. On the next day, the Greeks fetched many waggon-loads of wood from the forest, and raised by the sea a mighty pile, no less than a hundred feet long and a hundred feet wide. Then the Myrmidons marched towards it in full battle array, and in their midst was carried the bier with the corpse of Patroclus, Achilles himself supporting the head. When the bier was set down, all the Myrmidons cut off locks of their hair, and covered the corpse with them, and Achilles placed his in the hand. Then the bier was raised up on the top of the pile, and all round it were placed the bodies of slaughtered animals and other things that might be acceptable to the dead. The huge pile was now set on fire, and all night long the flames continued to burn. It was not until the morning dawned that the funeral pile sank to ashes, and then Achilles and the other princes extinguished the smouldering embers with wine, and gathered out from among them

the bones of Patroclus, which they laid in a golden urn, the most beautiful that Achilles possessed. The urn, however, was not at once buried, as was the custom, but carried back to the tent of Achilles that his bones might be added to those of his friend ; for he knew that he should not long survive him. On the spot where the funeral pile had stood a hillock of earth was raised, but only of moderate height ; a more stately mound was to take its place when the united bones of the two friends should rest in the earth beneath it.

After this was over, Achilles prepared magnificent funeral games to do honour to the memory of the dead, and all the Greeks were bidden to assemble,—the people to look on, and the nobles and princes to measure their strength and skill one against the other ; and Achilles brought out from amongst his treasures costly prizes, whose value would alone have kindled the ardour of those who were to contend for them, even had they cared nothing for the glory of the victory. The heroes vied with each other, first in chariot racing, then in boxing, wrestling, foot racing, hurling the spear, and throwing the discus, and lastly in shooting with the bow. The games lasted till sunset, and those who returned in safety to their homes after the war was ended, used to the end of their lives to relate to their children and

grandchildren, how skilled were the competitors, and how magnificent were the prizes on this day.

When the games were at an end, Achilles stretched himself upon his couch, but he could not sleep, for the image of his dead friend was constantly before his eyes. He tossed from side to side, thinking of all the joys and the troubles that Patroclus had shared with him, and at last he sprang up and rushed down to the shore, where he ran wildly to and fro. Then, as the first rays of the morning sun reddened the sky, he returned to his tent, harnessed his horses to his chariot, bound the corpse of Hector to it as before, and dragged it three times round the mound of earth. And this he did for several nights following.

CHAPTER XII.

PRIAM IN THE CAMP OF THE GREEKS.

ALL the men of Troy were plunged into deep sorrow by the death of Hector, their bravest hero, and it seemed to them as if they could already see the flames springing up around their city. But most sorrowful of all were his parents and his brothers and sisters. To the eyes of the aged Priam there came no sleep, and he neither ate nor drank, but day and night he sat in the courtyard with his grey head wrapt in his mantle, and every now and then, when the remembrance of his grief overcame him, he would roll upon the ground weeping and lamenting, till no stranger would have recognised the king in the dust-covered figure given over to sorrow. All round him sat his sons and daughters, weeping also and bemoaning the dead. But after twelve days had passed, the gods, whom Hector had ever honoured, and who loved him, took pity on the poor old father. They poured courage into his soul and inspired

him with the resolve to venture into the camp of the Greeks and beg the body of his son from Achilles.

He rose up suddenly and ordered his chariot to be brought out, that he might go in it to the tents of Achilles. The old queen and her sons implored him not to place himself at the mercy of their deadly enemy, but fearlessly he answered : 'The gods will protect me ; and even should I meet with my death, I will gladly die if I may but once more hold in my arms the body of my son.' At last they were obliged to give way to him, and harnessed his chariot, and also another, on which they placed the ransom. Priam had chosen out of his treasures whatever was most costly and magnificent, and he took so much that the mules found it no light weight to draw. An old herald guided the chariot of Priam, and the Trojans accompanied him to the gate of the city fearing that they would never see him again.

Evening was drawing on when the chariots reached the little stream that flowed through the plain. They stopped to let the animals drink, but at that moment there appeared, coming towards them from the Greek camp, a noble-looking young warrior clad in armour. The herald immediately advised that they should flee back towards the city, and the king himself was seized with fear

But the young warrior approached them kindly, for it was no other than the help-giving god Hermes, who had been sent by Zeus to conduct the king in safety to the camp of the Greeks. He pretended to be astonished at the boldness of Priam's enterprise, and then he added, 'Thy grey hairs remind me of my father, from whom I have long been separated, and I will help thee. I am a Myrmidon, and will conduct thee to the tents of Achilles.' Full of surprise and joy, Priam begged him to accept a beautiful cup from among those which he had selected for the ransom, but Hermes put it back quickly, and said that he would not dare to take any present without the knowledge of Achilles. He mounted the chariot, and placing himself by the side of Priam, took the reins, and guided it to the nearest gate of the camp. Priam asked him whether the body of his son were still in the camp, or whether it had already been devoured by wild beasts. Hermes answered: 'It looks as if he had died but yesterday; the gods have surely preserved it from all harm.' And it was even as he said; for the gods had themselves taken care of the body, so that it had neither been injured by time nor by the constant dragging in the dust.

By the time they reached the wall of the camp, it was quite dark. The gate was fastened

with strong bars, and behind it watchmen were stationed. But the might of the god threw the watchmen into a deep sleep, and the door opened of its own accord. When they reached the tents of Achilles, Hermes told the king who he was, and immediately vanished.

Achilles was sitting in his tent, buried in thought, when he suddenly felt his hand grasped and kissed, and saw kneeling at his feet the sorrowful old man, whom he at once recognised. Priam said to him: 'Be pitiful and give me the body of my son, for which I offer a goodly ransom. Thy father grieves because thou art away from him, but I am far more unhappy than he, for I have lost the greater number of my sons, and now the best and dearest of them all; and so great is my misery, that I am constrained to kiss the hand which has slain my son.' Achilles was touched by the words about his own father; moreover the gods had softened his heart, and his anger had in some degree spent itself. Gently he bade the old man stand up, and said that he would grant his request. He went out to see about the exchange, but took care to leave Priam in the tent; for he feared lest the sight of his son's corpse should move the father to curse him, and that then his own wrath at the death of Patroclus would break forth anew.

and he might be tempted to slay the old man. The ransom was taken down from the chariot, and in its stead was placed the body, which had meanwhile been washed and anointed by the women, and which was now wrapped in a splendid covering, and laid upon a bier. After this, Achilles returned to the tent, and pressed the king to eat and drink. He had moreover couches prepared for the king and the herald in the front part of his tent, and the two old men rested peacefully under his roof. Before daybreak, however, Hermes appeared again and bade them hasten home. Quickly the horses and mules were harnessed, and the chariots passed unnoticed between the tents of the sleeping Greeks, and through the gate, which again opened to them of its own accord. Hermes went with them as far as the stream, and by the time the sun had risen, they had almost reached the city. The king's sons were watching from the walls, and as soon as they saw him approaching they hastened to meet him. All the citizens followed them also, weeping aloud when they caught sight of the shrouded corpse.

The funeral ceremonies lasted for twelve days, and during all that time the Trojans were left undisturbed by the Greeks, for Achilles had promised the king, unasked, that for so long a time he would restrain the Greeks from the battle.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEATH OF ACHILLES AND OF AJAX.

WHEN the battle began again, the Trojans lost many more of their bravest heroes by the hand of Achilles ; yet it was not long before he also met his death. At close quarters and with equal weapons, no one was a match for him ; but whilst he was fighting in the thick of the battle, smiting down everyone within his reach, Paris laid an arrow upon his bowstring and aimed at him. The god Apollo guided the shaft, and the mightiest hero of the Greeks was wounded to death. But although Achilles felt that his hour was come, he would not yield at once to the dread messenger, but fought on as long as he had strength to wield his spear, spreading death and destruction all around him. Heaped about him on all sides were the dead bodies of those he had slain, when at last he suddenly gave way and fell upon the ground, a corpse himself. The Trojans would have spoiled him of his armour and dragged his body to their city to wreak their

vengeance upon it, but the Greeks gathered round it, and after long fighting wrested it from them and bore it back to their camp.

For many days his mother Thetis and all the Greeks mourned and bewailed the death of Achilles, and after his corpse had been burnt, his bones were placed beside those of Patroclus in the golden urn. The urn was then buried, and over the grave of the two friends was raised a mound that could be seen from far, with a pillar of stone on its summit. The next day funeral games were celebrated in honour of Achilles, and Thetis brought all her most beautiful treasures to be given as rewards to the victors.

Thetis also gave to King Agamemnon the armour and the weapons of Achilles, and said that they were to be given to whichever of the Greek heroes was most worthy of possessing them, and that the heroes were themselves to decide whose they should be. Then two heroes came forward to claim the honour, both of whom were worthy—the mighty Ajax and the wise Ulysses. The judges were long in doubt, but at last they decided for Ulysses; ‘for,’ said they, ‘in giant strength and courage on the battle-field there is indeed none like Ajax; but Ulysses is not only a brave hero, but is also distinguished for wisdom.

'He is the most worthy.' And they gave him the prize of honour.

Ajax was deeply wounded, and he longed to be avenged not only on his rival, but also on all those who had decided in his favour. Whilst all others were asleep, he sat at the door of his tent brooding over his defeat, and in his fury he considered whether he should set the camp on fire, and thus deliver all the Greeks over to death, or whether he should fall upon his enemies and murder them only. He finally resolved that the last course would be best, and sprang up to go to their tents and destroy them. But the goddess Athene was watching over the heroes, and she now worked confusion in the mind of Ajax and dazzled his sight. Instead of taking the way to the tents, he strode towards the pasture where the flocks were kept that the Greeks had from time to time taken as spoil ; and imagining that the sheep were Greeks, he soon espied amongst them those whom he took to be Agamemnon, and Menelaus, and Nestor, and Diomedes, and killed them with his sword. There was a noble ram whom he supposed to be Ulysses ; on him he heaped words of angry abuse, and taking a thorn-stick he scourged him with it until he had thus satisfied his fury, and then killed him. Then he sank upon the ground exhausted, and went to sleep.

But when he awoke in the morning, with his reason restored, and saw all around him the dead sheep instead of the enemies that he had intended to kill, he was filled with the deepest shame. 'How will they despise me,' he thought, 'who intended to kill my enemies and have wreaked my vengeance on sheep!' He could not bear to live any longer, and he drew his sword—the same that Hector had bestowed on him as a gift of honour after his fight with him—buried the handle deep in the earth, and threw himself upon the point.

All the Greeks mourned for Ajax, and Ulysses would willingly have given up the arms of Achilles if that would have recalled the dead hero to life.

CHAPTER XIV

NEOPTOLEMUS AND PHILOCTETES.

THE ranks of the Greeks had been terribly thinned by the long war, and now Achilles and Ajax, two of the mainstays of the host, had quickly followed one another to the Lower World. In their distress the Greeks remembered that when Achilles had come from the island of Scyros to join their army, he had left behind him a young son named Neoptolemus. The boy had by this time grown up to be a brave youth, of whom they often heard that he had the same fiery eyes as his father, and the same dauntless heart. Ulysses, therefore, and Diomedes went to the island to ask if he would come to Troy and help them to storm the city, seeing that his father had fallen before the goal was reached. The mother of Neoptolemus was full of grief at the thought of her son going to the ill-fated war; but the young hero could not be restrained, and she was obliged to let him return to Troy with the messengers. The Myrmidons were rejoiced to see him,

for he was the image of his father, and in the first battle he proved that he also inherited his valour; in the armour of Achilles which Ulysses had willingly given up to him, he fought in the front ranks of the Myrmidons, and the Trojans feared him almost as much as they had feared Achilles.

There was yet another hero who came at this time to the help of the Greeks. Ten years ago, on their journey to Troy, the Greeks had touched at an island where they landed and offered a sacrifice to the gods. Then there came suddenly, from under the altar which they had raised upon the turf, a serpent, who darted at one of the heroes, named Philoctetes, and bit him in the foot. The wound afterwards festered, causing Philoctetes terrible agony, and an intolerable odour arose from it. Brave and heroic as Philoctetes was, the pain was so great that he could not refrain from uttering cries and moans which disturbed the sacrifices; for any sound of pain uttered while a sacrifice was being offered prevented the gods from having any pleasure in it. Moreover, the odour was so overpowering that no one could remain near him. So while the sick hero was asleep, Ulysses and Diomedes carried him to the island of Lemnos and laid him down there in a solitary cave. By his side they placed his bow and arrows

and a supply of food, and then they left the island

Philoctetes was ready to despair when he awoke and found himself forsaken. He cursed the Greeks for having left him to bear his pain in solitude and at last die of hunger, for he could only crawl a few steps with the utmost difficulty, and found it was quite beyond his power to go farther inland to seek for some compassionate people who might be willing to help him. Nevertheless, he made the best of his wretched lot ; he crept out of the cavern and collected dry wood with which he made a fire, and any wild creatures that ran or flew past him he killed with his arrows, and thus prolonged his miserable life. He also made for himself a covering out of the feathers of the birds when his old clothes fell to pieces. But full of rage and despair he was, and continued to be, whenever he was overtaken by his terrible pains and found himself without anyone to moisten his lips with a drop of water, or give him any help.

He had been living for ten long years in this miserable manner, when the soothsayer Calchas said that the Greeks would never get possession of Troy until Philoctetes came to their aid with his bow and arrows. These had been given to his father by Heracles, in return for his having set fire to the

funeral pile on which the hero had placed himself to die, and had been often used by Heracles himself. Among the arrows were some that had been dipped in the gall of the Hydra, whose least scratch gave a deadly wound.¹ When therefore the help of Philoctetes was pronounced to be necessary the same heroes who had landed him in the island were sent to bring him to Troy. They found him in the selfsame spot, but how changed was his appearance! His face and hair were covered with dust and dirt, and his body was so thin that all his bones could be plainly seen beneath the skin. But in his eyes there still lingered the old fire, and now they glittered with rage when, in the heroes who approached him, he recognised two of those who had so terribly aggravated his sufferings by thrusting him away from them because of his misfortune. It was a long time before he would have anything to say to them, but at last, enticed by the prospect of being again among his fellow-men, he gave in, and allowed Ulysses and Diomedes to carry him to the ship. During the voyage, he was many times seized with the old pains, but the moment he landed on the Trojan shore the wound healed, the pain ceased, and he became again a noble-looking hero, as before.

¹ See *Myths of Hellas* (Longmans & Co.), pp. 116, 146.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DEATH OF PARIS.

FROM this time Philoctetes fought among the Greeks, and many of the enemy were laid low by his arrows. He was the best archer in the Greek army ; and as Paris was the best among the Trojans, they soon found themselves facing one another in the battle. Paris had just shot a Greek hero, when Philoctetes spied him, and crying out, ' It is thou who hast brought all this misery upon the Greeks, and now shalt thou atone for it,' he shot an arrow at him, but only wounded him slightly in the hand. Paris was about to draw an arrow from his quiver to return the shot, but Philoctetes was quicker than he, and his second arrow wounded Paris in the lower part of the body. Paris fell to the ground in anguish ; and in the arms of his comrades he was carried back into the city.

There were many physicians in Troy who sought with all manner of herbs to heal the wound, but the arrows of Heracles were like no others, and

the wounds which they caused could be healed by no physician. There was only one hope for Paris, and it was this: Near Mount Ida there lived a woman, who, if she would, could cure him, her name was C  none and she was the former wife of Paris, whom he had thrust away when he had brought Helen from Greece. Before that time he had loved her with all his heart, and C  none cared for him, in return, with a love far deeper and stronger than his. Sorrowfully she had returned to her parents when the new wife was brought home to the house of Paris, and there she had remained, full of grief and bitterness, all these long ten years.

In his distress, Paris remembered how tenderly C  none had loved him in the past, and he hoped that she would be willing to forgive the wrong he had done her, and to help him in his time of need.

Wearily and painfully he made his way to her home, and falling at her feet, he implored her to have pity on him. But she looked at him in anger and said,

If it lay in my power, I would requite thee for the bitter pain thou hast caused me to suffer by tearing thee in pieces, and it would refresh me to drink thy blood.' And with that, she turned away from him.

Paris would have returned to Troy, but he could not get so far. Before he had left Mount Ida he

was overcome by his pain, and he sank down and died in the very same valley where he had once been tending his father's sheep when the three goddesses came to him to decide between them. The shepherds of the neighbourhood, who still remembered him and loved him, came and placed the body of the dead man upon a bier, and then raised for it a funeral-pile, to which they set fire.

CEnone saw the flames from afar, and when she asked what it was, she was told that it was the body of Paris they were burning. Then in a moment, as soon as she heard that he was dead, all her old love for him came back, and she could think of nothing but the happy days she had once spent with him. Whilst everyone else in the house was asleep, she arose from her couch and went through the forest towards the flaming pile. At any other time she would have been afraid of being alone at night in the forest, because of the wild beasts and the loneliness of the road, but now she thought of nothing but of hastening as quickly as possible to the place where the shepherds had rendered the last honours to their old comrade. When she had reached it, she broke out into loud lamentation, and wrapping her veil round her, she leaped into the flames and was burnt with Paris. Afterwards, when the flames had spent themselves, the shep-

herds extinguished the ashes with wine ; and, when they had gathered out the bones of Paris and CEnone, they buried them together in the same urn. A mound of earth was raised over the grave, and the spot was marked by two pillars formed of rocks piled one upon the other.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TAKING OF TROY.

THE Trojans had by this time given up all hope of conquering their enemies in the open field, and they now shut themselves up in their city, keeping watch from the walls. So the war remained at a standstill; for it was in vain that the Greeks tried to entice their enemies again into the plain; neither could they gain an entrance to the city. About this time, the priest Calchas, who understood all the signs which were from time to time vouchsafed by the gods, saw a hawk pursuing a dove. He had almost overtaken her, when she glided into a crevice of a rock where he could not follow her; he hid himself however among the foliage of a tree that was near by, and waited there. After some time the dove came out of the hole, thinking that the hawk had gone away, but hardly had she left her place of safety than the hawk darted out from the tree, seized her by the wing, and devoured her. Calchas related what he had seen to the Greek heroes, and

told them it signified that they must imitate the hawk, and get possession of the city through craft.

The wise Ulysses thought much about this, and at last invented a stratagem which had never been tried before and which had never occurred to anyone else. He imparted his plan to the other princes, and they all praised it except Neoptolemus and Philoctetes, who held that it was a disgrace to have recourse to craft and cunning, instead of meeting their enemies face to face in fair fight. But Ulysses said to Neoptolemus, 'All our efforts in the field have been in vain ; thy father himself, with his lion-like courage, and his more than mortal strength, failed to get possession of the city. By craft alone can we gain our end.' Then the two heroes allowed themselves to be persuaded.

Now it happened that several trees had fallen in the forest, and had been dragged down to the camp. There was, moreover, among the Greeks a hero named Epeus, who was a clever carpenter. Out of the planks cut from the fallen wood, this man fashioned, with marvellous skill, a gigantic horse, so large that there was room in its hollow body for more than fifty armed men, and in the under part of the body was a door made to fasten from the inside. When the horse was ready, the

bravest heroes were chosen to go inside it, and they clambered up into the body by means of a ladder. Epeus was the last to enter, and when he had taken his place, he drew in the ladder after him, and shut the door.

The other Greeks put out their ships to sea and prepared everything for their departure ; then they set fire to their tents and made a great blaze. By the light of the flames they set sail in the evening, intending the Trojans to suppose that they had given up the war and departed to their own homes. But they only went as far as the island of Tenedos, and there hid their ships from sight in a creek that ran far inland.

All night long the Trojans watched the burning camp, and in the morning they came out of the city to examine it, but they had taken care to arm themselves for battle, for they thought it might be a stratagem, and that the Greeks might be concealed on the shore, ready to fall upon them unexpectedly. They searched the whole place however to no purpose ; everything was silent and deserted, and they thought that at last the war had really come to an end. The huge wooden horse which remained standing on the plain astonished them beyond measure, and they could not tell what to think of it. Some suggested one thing and some another,

and they were still perplexing themselves with guesses, when a man was brought forward who had just been found hidden in a thicket near by. This man was a Greek named Sinon, who had volunteered to remain behind and deceive the Trojans, according to the instructions of Ulysses. They brought him before the king, who had come out upon the plain with several of the chief men of the city, and asked him what had become of the Greeks, and why they had built this great horse. At first neither friendly words nor threats could draw any answer from him, but at last, with much pretended reluctance, he broke silence, and said, 'Base indeed must it seem on my part to betray the secret of my countrymen. But they deserve it at my hands, for before they set sail, they laid hold on me, and would have offered me as a sacrifice to the gods of the sea, had not chance enabled me to burst my bonds and escape into this thicket. Know, then, that the Greeks have abandoned the war and returned to their homes. The horse yonder has been built as an offering to the goddess Athene, that she may prosper their return, and the priest Calchas has said that with that horse is bound up your fate both now and in the future. For if you disregard it, destruction will quickly overtake you, but should you receive it into your citadel, then will good fortune

abide with you, and you will gain dominion over all the country near and far.'

When Sinon had finished speaking, there were many differing opinions among the Trojans as to how his words should be received. Some were distrustful, and counselled that the mighty horse should be pierced through and through with spears and lances, or else that it should be conveyed to the top of a mountain and cast down into the valley beneath ; but the crowd would not listen to any warnings, and did not cease to clamour until it was decided that it should be at once conveyed to the city. It was accordingly covered with wreaths of flowers and leaves ; innumerable cords were tied round its head, its legs, and its body, and joyful was he who could possess himself of one of these cords and help to drag the huge horse forward, for he thought that he was taking his part in bringing about a future in which there would be no need to dread the approach of any enemy. With songs of joy they toiled at their heavy burden, and at last brought it as far as the gate of the city. Then they perceived that the gate was too low for the horse to enter ; but they thought, ' What need have we now of the protection of a gate ? ' and forthwith broke it down.

As they entered the city, however, they met with

an interruption. A maiden advanced towards them, who in a loud voice commanded them to stop and listen to her. It was Cassandra, one of the daughters of the king. Apollo had gifted her with the power of looking into the future and foretelling truly what would happen, but since then she had angered the god, and he had punished her by ordaining that no one should ever believe her ; and thus, though she could always foretell calamities, she was never able to prevent them. She stood now before the horse, and cried, 'Unhappy people, who are carrying destruction into our city! Already do I see it filled with fire and murder and blood. But as for you, ye greet your evil fate with songs of joy. Know that your meal to-day is the last ye shall eat.' But this warning made no impression upon the people ; they said one to another, 'We know her well, she is a mad woman,' and taking no further notice, they continued to drag the horse onwards till they had brought it into the citadel. Then they betook themselves to their houses, and celebrated the peace which they believed had come to them, with eating and drinking. The choicest wines were brought out, and in all the houses were heard the sounds of piping and flute-playing, for no such joyful day had dawned upon them during all these long ten years. So they thought ; but, of a truth, destruction

was waiting at their very door, ready to burst upon them.

Night came on and found the city asleep and silent ; many of the citizens indeed were sleeping more heavily than was their wont, intoxicated with the wine they had drunk. Sinon had revelled with them, and was greeted everywhere as their best friend, who had freed them from all care. Now he might have been seen slinking through the streets till he reached a hill near the city, where he held up in the air a burning torch, as a signal to the Greeks in Tenedos that it was time for them to return. Then he went back to the place where the huge horse was standing. A very gentle call was sufficient, and the horse became full of life : the door underneath its body was thrown open, the ladder was let down, and the heroes descended one by one

And now the stillness of the night was at an end. With a loud war-cry the heroes burst through the streets, and breaking into the houses of the sleeping Trojans, murdered them in their beds, but as for Menelaüs, his first care was to hasten to the house where Helen was, and take her away to a place of safety. The Trojans, awakened by the noise, seized their weapons and rushed out of their houses, almost unclothed as they were, but they

soon met with their deaths in the unequal struggle. After a little while the other Greeks arrived from the ships, and then every street was full of shrieks of agony and sights of blood and horror. The Greeks set fire to the city, and the flames hideously lighted up the struggle in the streets. All the men of Troy were slain, and the women and children carried off as slaves. The old king in the citadel saw the flames bursting out all over the city, but his arm was too weak for him to seize his weapons and join in the fight; he could only, in despair, hide his head in his mantle, and await his end. Soon the Greeks pressed into the citadel, with Neoptolemus at their head, and by him was Priam slain. Few indeed were the Trojans who escaped from the city, and only one single house with its inhabitants was spared by the Greeks. It was the house of the aged Antenor, who twelve years before had received Ulysses and Menelaus when they came as ambassadors to Troy, and had saved them from being outraged by the mob.¹

A terrible sight was that presented at sunrise by the once rich and prosperous city of Troy. The houses lay in ruins, and a thick cloud of smoke hung over the city. The plain beyond was strewn with all the riches of the citizens which had now become

¹ See p. 12.

the property of the conquerors, and in the midst of the other spoils sat the unhappy Trojan women, clinging to one another in their misery. The day before they had been far apart in rank and position, for some were princesses, others citizens' wives and daughters, and others beggar-women ; but now they were all reduced to the same condition, and expected one and all the same fate, namely that they would be carried off as slaves, to serve their new masters in the land of Greece.

Of the Trojan allies also, but few lived to see their homes again. There had come from the country of Lycia a noble army to the help of King Priam, and their wives and mothers were now eagerly looking for their return ; but of all that great host, one only returned alive, and when he told the women that all the rest were killed, they were so carried away with despair and misery, that they took up stones and stoned him to death for bringing them such bad news.

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¹ 'Myths of Hellas' by the Author of the 'Trojan War' Longmans & Co. For pages referred to, see Index.

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